

NEWSLETTER

No 10 – 22 October 2010

AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED SCHOOL INSPIRING RESPECT FOR PEOPLE, COMMUNITY AND TRADITION, POSITIONING OUR STUDENTS FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

CALENDAR

Mon 25 October
Yr 12 Farewell breakfast

Tues 26 October
Yr 12 Graduation 7.15pm at
Adelaide Town Hall

Thur 28 October
Student ID Photos for 2011

Friday 29 October
STUDENT FREE DAY – Staff
Professional Developmt.

Mon 1 to Wed 17 November
Yr 12 Exams

Tues 2 November
Finance Advisory Com. 7pm
Principal's Tour 9.15am

Wed 3 November
Yr 12 Art Exhibit in Vis Arts
6.30-7.30pm

Thur 4 November
'Trial of Robin of Blackwood'
Perf. in PAC 6.30pm

Fri 5 November
SRC - UNIFORM FREE DAY

Mon 8 November
Yr 8 Aquatics Day

Tues 9 November
Yr 9 Aquatics Day
Sunset Festival on front
lawns 5.30-7.30pm
Choreog. Awards 7.30pm
Finance Advisory Com. 7pm

Mon 8 November
Yr 8 Aquatics Day

Wed 10 November
Last day of Yr 11 lessons

Thurs 11 November
Yr 11 Study leave

Fri 12 to 19 November
Yr 11 Exams

Sun 14 November
Bee Wood Combo perform
10.30am at Blackwood
Rotary Christmas Fair

Tues 16 November
Gov Council Mtg 7pm

Thur 18 November
Parents & Friends Mtg 1.30pm

Mon 22 to Fri 26 November
Yr 8-10 Exams

Tues 23 November
2011 Yr 8 Parent Info Eve
6.30pm in PAC

Wed 1 December
2011 Yr 8 Orientation Day

The appointment of the Principal for 2011 and 2012.

The following letter was sent to staff from the Regional Director, Ann Millard:

"Dear All

Following Susan Hyde's appointment to the Australian Science and Mathematics School (ASMS) from the start of Term 3, a selection process to identify the next Principal of Blackwood High School has been conducted. As a result of the recent State Government Budget announcement of the amalgamation of Blackwood High and Blackwood Primary Schools, I have been advised by Michael Papps, Superintendent, Site Human Resources that the tenure of the position will be for 2 years. This will provide sufficient time for the Principal to collaboratively lead the amalgamation, while ensuring that the learning needs of current students are met. It is envisaged that the Principal position for the new, amalgamated school will be advertised well within the 2 years.

I am delighted to advise that Marion Coady, currently Principal of Mt Barker High School, has accepted the position. Marion brings a wealth of experience as a School Principal in a range of regional and metropolitan settings. She will make herself available to the Leadership Team of Blackwood High School during Term 4, as preparation for commencing the role at the start of 2011.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding work of the Leadership Team, and Jude Hines as leader of the school in particular, throughout the second half of 2010. It is clear that the school has continued to progress school priorities, throughout this period, achieving positive influences on the school culture and curriculum. I am sure that the Leadership Team, join me, in welcoming Marion to the school.

As details of the amalgamation become available, they will be shared with staff who play a key role in ensuring that the needs of students, parents and staff are met within the newly configured school. I look forward to working with you in this important stage of the development of Blackwood High School."

Ann Millard, Regional Director, Southern Adelaide.

BHS 50th BIRTHDAY PLANNING

Well respected business identity, Bill Spurr, currently Chair of Education Adelaide has accepted the



role of patron for our 50th birthday year. Bill, one of our founding scholars was the first BHS head prefect in 1961 and has been supporting Blackwood High School since that time. Bill is pictured enjoying time out in his sponsored seat in our Performing Arts Centre.

Mr Chris Daw, former Assistant Principal at BHS has generously accepted the role of 50th Birthday Coordinator to carry on the marvellous ground work that Jodie Kelley has provided. If you wish to assist by being a sponsor (Platinum \$1000, Gold \$500, Silver \$200 or Bronze \$100) or just contact one of our decade coordinators, please go to the BHS website on www.bhs.sa.edu.au and register your name. The events planned are:

- **Gala Garden Party - 27 March, 2011**
This event is aimed at all previous students that have attended the school over the 50 years and will be held in a garden marquee on school premises.
- **"Rock, Roll and Relive" Community Event - 10 April, 2011**
Scheduled for a Sunday with the theme "Rock, Roll and Relive", this will be open to the community including previous, current and future students and their families.

Jude Hines, Principal

MATERIAL & SERVICES CHARGES 2010/11

Thank you to all families who have paid their Material & Services Charges for 2010 and those families who are honouring their part payments.

The school will be holding a Governing Council Meeting on **Tuesday 16 November 2010**. At this meeting the Governing Council will be authorising the amount of the 2011 Material & Services charge. We would like to invite you to this **public meeting**, which will be held in the Staffroom at **7.00pm**. If you are unable to attend this meeting, you can express your views in writing to be presented by David Pressley, Chairperson, on the night. If you have any questions in relation to the proposed 2011 charge, please call the school on 8278 0900.

Chris Plummer, Business Manager

WHEN THE SHOE FITS.....

Governing Council met Tuesday this week and a topic of concern focussed on parent support for our school uniform and in particular, footwear. ALL staff have been asked to be consistent and to support the monitoring of school uniform. Parents who DO support our uniform are really battling when all of us, as a school community, do not support the wearing of full, correct school uniform. Just to remind you, the following is the requirement.

As quoted on pages 9 & 10 in the diary, **ALL students are required to wear:**

“Flat heeled black shoes with fully closed top of shoe, closed back, with black laces, OR completely black sneakers with black laces. Canvas shoes do not provide adequate protection and slip on shoes that expose the top of the foot are not appropriate.”

As of Monday 25 October, students who are not in the correct school uniform, including shoes **will receive an After School Detention** as we will assume that this is deliberate disobedience unless you as parents write a note advising when your child will be in correct uniform.

We ask your support in promoting a safe learning environment and a well groomed and presented image to the community.

Jude Hines

SRC UNIFORM FREE DAY and KYTONS BAKERY OFFER.

Our SRC works tirelessly to raise money for a variety of causes. On Friday, 5 November, the SRC are holding a uniform free day. A \$2 gold coin donation will be required for students who wish to participate.

Students must wear neat, casual clothing that is appropriate for a day's schooling activities. The following items must **NOT** be worn:

Backless shoes, thongs or sandals, singlet tops, low cut revealing tops, short or cut off shorts, short mini skirts that are shorter than mid thigh.

Please also consider the **Kytons Bakery** offer. An order sheet is included with this newsletter and may be returned to Student Services with the **payment by Wednesday 3 November** for collection on Wednesday 10 November from the Conference Room between 12.30pm to 4pm.

Jude Hines for the SRC

EXPECT RESPECT

EXPECT RESPECT - A DRAMA-BASED PERFORMANCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BY YOUNG PEOPLE

On Wednesday 15 September, our Year 11 Family Studies and Year 11 Legal Studies students attended a workshop called **Expect Respect**. The workshop ran for one hour and was funded by a State Attorney-General's Anti Violence Community Education Grant.

The drama-based workshop raised awareness of sexual offences with a particular focus on the issue of consent. Using 'talk-back-theatre', the **Expect Respect** peer educators

invited our students to direct the actions of the actors in an attempt to change the outcome of the performance. Students enjoyed the high quality performance and found the presentation challenging and thought provoking. **Expect Respect** has been developed by the *Legal Services Commission* in collaboration with young people and *Act Now Theatre for Social Change*.

Argie Buesnel, Year 11 Manager



ROTARY HEALTH OF THE RIVER FORUM

Congratulations to Tosh Glenn in year 9 who successfully nominated for the Rotary Health of the River Forum from 4-7 November, 2010.

The intention of the forum is for students to learn about the health of our rivers and the ways that river health impacts our lives. The four day event is held at Lake Cullulleraine, 50km west of Mildura, Victoria.

The forum offers an exciting opportunity for interested students and future leaders to become involved in a long-weekend of activities that are designed to raise their awareness of the needs of, and ways of maintaining, an ecologically sound river system. The forum examines the importance of the river environment to our communities as well as focusing on the role that young people can play in educating the community and changing attitudes to water.

Students can expect to participate in a range of water based activities that illustrate both the costs and benefits of water resource management. From the environmental side, the students sample fish, bugs, aquatic plants and water quality and, in the process, learn about their biology and the impacts of our use of the resource. The students also visit Lindemans Winery, Lock 11, learn about indigenous cultural heritage on the Murray floodplain and participate in a role play game where the demands of the environment have to be traded off against economic and social issues. The camp isn't all work however, as there are opportunities for physical activities including canoeing, swimming and yachting on the lake.

The camp culminates in the students giving a presentation on what river health means to them.

Students currently in year 8 and 9 are encouraged to think about nominating for the forum in 2011.

Robyn Giles, Science Coordinator

BLACKWOOD COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Frances Collett, one of our Year 11 students, performed at the Blackwood Community Library, on Sunday, 17 October, as part of the Mitcham Community's Every Generation Festival. Frances was a terrific ambassador for the school, playing a selection of jazz standards to an appreciative audience of library-goers. **Next Sunday, the Vocal Group will perform from 2.30–3.00pm and 3.30pm till 4pm at the Blackwood Library, 215 Main Road, Blackwood.**

CYBER SAFETY – from the BHS Student Services Team

E-technology provides today's learners with a powerful means of communicating instantly with others in both positive and negative ways.

At Blackwood HS, we are having ongoing conversation with and education of staff and students around the safe and appropriate use of E-technologies (including Facebook, text messaging, and instant messaging systems-MSN).

Members of South Australia Police - SAPOL's crime prevention unit at the Sturt Police station have visited BHS to talk to all year 9s, and made a presentation at a staff meeting to discuss cyber-safety and the law.

Year 8 students have discussed cyber-safety issues at assemblies and during care group.

Last week, students received a green brochure entitled 'Cyber-bullying, e-crime and the protection of children and young people', which provides information and advice about what to do if children or young people are feeling unsafe or uncomfortable following online or mobile phone communications, or exposure to offensive internet sites.

We continue to teach responsible computer and internet use at school and cover safety with our students. All students sign a computer user agreement in their diary which outlines appropriate computer use.

Tips for Students: 'Mum Test' – If you wouldn't like to repeat what you said in front of your mum, dad or grandparent, then you probably shouldn't say it to anyone.

'If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is'. If someone contacts you, offers you a gift or money for doing something, get an adult straight away. This is how scammers try to get you. Under NO circumstances give your details to someone, never tell them your full name, address or phone number. If someone asks for this, get an adult straight away.

Tips for Parents: Be involved. Put the computer in public area where you can keep up to date with your child's activities and you can also find out about what they are using it for and what they are interested in. **Don't allow internet access in their bedrooms.**

Communicate: Talk to your child about what they are doing on the computer and sit with them and help them find information. Let them know that if they find something inappropriate they are to tell you, and reassure them that they won't get in trouble; rather you'll be glad that they let you know.

Internet safety: There are some excellent government website and resources. You can get a free internet filter – a program that prevents suspect material from going to your computer and lots of great advice on computer

safety from www.netalert.gov.au and <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>

Craig Duguid, Assistant Principal, Middle School

Help Support the World Challenge

teams by attending the



Traditional Malaysian Dinner

Saturday 13 November

6.30pm Blackwood Football Club

\$35 per head including;

- 2 courses and a welcome drink
- Silent Auction
- Guest speakers
- Band

Tickets available from Student Services at BHS

Tickets must be booked by Friday 5 November, 2010.

All Proceeds support the World Challenge Team Community Project and Students

Contact Dan Smith daniel.smith@bhs.sa.edu.au or Peta Maher peta.maher@bhs.sa.edu.au for more information

BOYS KNOCKOUT NETBALL REPORT

Positions to get on the Open Boys and Year 8/9 Boys Netball teams for this year's Knockout competition were again fiercely contested.

The Open Boys team of:

Nathan Frick, Sam Fotheringham, Matt MacBeth, Jake Piper, Jarrad Lobasso, Mitchell Rundle, Denam Moore, Daniel Bennetts, Ryan Dunkley and Adam Quigley defeated Seaview HS comfortably in a home game, and advanced to the finals.

Unfortunately, the Open Boys team was depleted for the finals at ETSA Park on Wednesday 15 September, so Mitch Standley, Ben Papps, Chris Dry, Jordan Colbert and Jordan Meseldzija were recruited. The team contested enthusiastically all day but were unsuccessful in their efforts. Best all round player for consistency and effort was Jake Piper. Congratulations.

The Year 8/9 Boys team of:

Lachlan Milligan, Corey LeMieux, Jack Wilkins, Shane Graham, Taylor Moore, Sean Anderson, Martin Foster, Todd Eshmade, Elliot Victorsen and Sam Hutchinson, were sent straight through to the finals day, due to a forfeit from Salisbury HS, also on 15 September.

These boys had a draw in their first game, but were unsuccessful in the remaining games, although they tried very hard all day. Best effort and performances were from Jack and Todd. Well done.

Thanks to Peta Maher who coached the Year 8/9 boys team for me on the finals day, to Brett Ellis for organisation, and to Steph Fotheringham for umpiring.

Chris Olenich, Coach/organiser

bhsforest 2010 SOCCER SUCCESS

The Boys U 18 and the Girls U 18 won their cup finals, and both teams won both the league and the cup this season.

Blackwood Forest is the Blackwood High based club that plays in the Noarlunga leagues on Saturday mornings. Games are played on a 'home and away' basis with official referees supplied by the association. In recent years it has been tremendously successful in engaging students in weekend sport and has been an extremely positive factor at Blackwood High. Next year, as in previous years we will hopefully field teams for both boys and girls in the Under 14, 16 and 18 divisions. The club philosophy encourages all students to participate and improve their fitness and team work.

bhsForest U18 Girls Soccer Champions

The Under 18 Girls travelled South Adelaide to play in the 2010 cup final against MDSC. The girls knew that they were in for a tough game against MDSC after having beaten them into second place in the league. The girls took control of the game and were unlucky on a number of occasions with their shots going wide or being saved. Blackwood took the lead through a goal from Zoe Smet which meant MDSC had to start attacking. The play went from one end of the pitch to the other and Blackwood led at the half-time whistle 1-0.

The second half started as the first finished with both teams having a number of shots. Whilst the score remained at 1-0 MDSC always had a chance and there were a few sharp intakes of breath as MDSC got closer. However, Blackwood kept the pressure on MDSC and were again unlucky not to extend their lead. The final whistle eventually blew with Blackwood the victors 1-0.

What a fantastic season for the girls, undefeated in the league and cup winners to round off a magnificent season!

A massive 'well done' for all of the efforts by all of the players this season; Cindy Bliznakovski, Kara Booth, Lauren Bungey, Sarah Bye, Rebecca Cowling, Steffie Davis, Caity Dyer-Steel, Molly Fletcher, Tess Fletcher, Jana Marwitz, Kaitlin McDermott, Rhiannon Ogilvey, Bec Pengelly, Tori Potter, Zoe Potter, Emily Pyke, Phoebe Siviour, Zoe Smet and Katrina Vlachos.



Noarlunga League Cup Final Day

The Under 18 boys travelled South Adelaide to play in the 2010 cup final against Reynella East. The guys knew that they were in for a tough game with this Reynella team, the only team not to have won a trophy this year. Reynella took the lead in the first five minutes when a shot was deemed to have crossed the line. Blackwood equalized from a Nick Long header and it was game on. However, Reynella came back to take the lead again and then scored a third goal to give Reynella a 3-1 lead. The team this year had every confidence in their ability and took the game to Reynella. A great individual effort and shot from Harley Burrell made the score 3-2 to Reynella. After a great through ball, Sam Williamson ran on, to hit a blistering shot that left the Reynella keeper no chance, and the scores tied at 3 a-piece. The half time whistle blew with the score 3-3 and everything to play for.

The second half started with Blackwood attacking Reynella at every opportunity, and another goal from Sam saw Blackwood take the lead for the first time. This was followed by a goal from Ollie Grant, which made the score 5-3 to Blackwood. However, Reynella never gave up and they managed to score another goal to make the score 5-4 which gave the Blackwood management a little concern. However, the game was secured with a second goal from Ollie to make the score 6-4 to Blackwood. This knocked the wind out of Reynella meaning that Blackwood easily controlled the final ten minutes. The final whistle blew with the score 6-4 to Blackwood.



What a fantastic season for the guys, undefeated in the league and cup winners to round off a magnificent season.

A massive 'well done' for all of the efforts by all of the players this season; Jacek Bestecki, Jayme Brocklebank, Harley Burrell, Stefan Chenoweth, Liam Dempsey, Haydn Funnell, Jake Gilpin, Oliver Grant, Blair Kennett, Joe Lane, Mikhail Litynsky, Nick Long, Nathan Martin, Bryn McComb, Jordan Meseldijza, Ryan Otworowski, Oliver Vialls, Adam Walton and Sam Williamson.

Andy Gilpin, Saturday Soccer Manager



Strawberry Fair 2010
Saturday 23rd of October
visit the strawberry fair web site for more information



Come along to Eden Hills Primary School, 78 Wilpena Street, Eden Hills
Variety stalls, International Food, Entertainment, White Elephant, trail bags and lots of fun!

Arts News

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✚ **October 24:** The Vocal Group will be performing at Blackwood Library at 2.30pm this Sunday.
- ✚ **October 31:** The String Ensemble, plus vocalists Hannah Worden and Georgia Cosercas will be performing at the Blackwood Library
- ✚ **November 3: Year 12 Art Exhibition** in the Blackwood HS Visual Arts Centre from **6.30-7.30pm** for invited guests, friends and family of the Year 12 Art/Design class. Our senior students always produce a stunning array of art work. Last year 5 of our students went on to exhibit their work in the SACE Art Show, a huge honour.
- ✚ **November 4: "The Trials of Robin of Blackwood"** Performing Arts students who have been working in association with Windmill Theatre are pleased to announce that they will be presenting their own version of the Robin Hood Legend, "The Trial of Robin of Blackwood" on the evening of 4 November, Commencing outside the Performing Arts Centre at **6.30 pm**. Our audience will be taken on a 'promenade' journey through a court trial and visits to the scene of the crime, to make up their own minds about the guilt or innocence of our hero. Students have been engaged at all levels in the creation of this show, which confronts some current environmental issues. How far will someone go to save a tree? It has been written by the students themselves, assisted by local writer and performer, Eliza Lovell. We are very pleased with the quality of the work and the opportunity this has given to the performers to showcase their skills to our audiences. Original music has been composed by Year 10 Music student, Andrew Newman and Dance students have contributed to choreography. Set, costume and poster design are also student driven. Running for just over an hour, this show promises to be an enjoyable and memorable entertainment. If you want to see what the students at Blackwood are really capable of then come along and support them – we promise you will be delighted – but make sure you wear comfortable shoes! Reasonably priced **tickets at \$10 adults, \$5 students**, are available at Student Services or at the door on the night.
- ✚ **November 9: The Sunset Festival**, from **5.30– 30pm**, promises to be a brilliant show, with lots of new budding performers as well as old favourites taking the stage. There'll be a sausage sizzle and other yummy food and drink for sale – and with any luck it *won't* be 40 degrees this year, but a nice balmy evening to listen to some rock music while relaxing on the Front Lawns.
Then:
- ✚ **The Choreographic Awards** begin at **7.35pm** at the finish of the Sunset Festival. Enthusiastic and talented students from years 8 to 12 are working on their entries to impress the judging panel and audience and walk away with the trophy. Tickets are \$5 at the door.
- ✚ **November 14: The Blackwood Rotary Christmas Fair** will be on a Sunday again at Karinya Reserve. Our **Bee Wood Combo** will be performing from 10.30 – 11.30am. We are delighted that old scholars Tim Murfitt, Sean Stevens and John Lee have come back to augment the band for our seasonal round of jazzy carols and soft rock standards. I think it's because they like wearing the santa hats.

Hope to see you at some of these events!

Robyn Trebilcock, Arts Coordinator

HIMEJI EXCHANGE VISIT

During the last school holidays four students, Michaela Lemm, Frances Collett, Sarah Martin and Bradley Thompson represented Blackwood High School on an exchange visit to our sister city in Japan, Himeji. The students were excellent ambassadors for their school and city and involved themselves totally in the excellent program organised for them by the Himeji International Exchange Organisation. The group pictured were welcomed by the Mayor of Himeji. If you enjoy reading about the students' experiences, you may consider applying to be part of the program next year.

Karyn Jones, Coordinator, International Student Programs

During the October holidays, four students, including me, travelled to Japan for a two week exchange. Knowledge of



Japanese was not required (although it would have helped) and hosting a student, who you would later stay with, for two weeks prior, was a requirement. It was good that I hosted Sento, my exchange partner, because once I got to Japan I had someone I could communicate easily with (even though many Japanese people can speak English very well). During the two week stay in Japan, I participated in many activities. My fondest memories are of Himeji castle (pictured left), Central Park, Mt. Shosha and (believe it or not) going to school.

School in Japan is very different from Australia. The technology is nowhere near the standard of most Australian schools, since we are projecting videos on to smart-boards, they are writing in chalk on



ard. The desks are made for one person, with a shelf built in for your books, and a hook for your bag. The hard, wooden and not too comfortable, but the most surprising thing, amongst all the discipline, is that, the lesson (history I think), more than half the class was asleep. Even Sento was asleep at one point. Later, I hat; students can sleep during class all they want, but have to get their homework and notes from another student, or go to ‘cram school’, which is basically night school. It was rather bizarre to see everyone sleeping in public, on trains and buses, something you would rarely see in Australia.

Japan was different in many other ways too. The houses were tiny on small blocks of land, but built high. My Japanese house was two storeys. There was my bedroom, the kitchen/dining room and the lounge/family/Sento’s sister and mother’s bedroom downstairs, and Sento’s room his brother’s room were upstairs. Another major difference I noticed is the way people travel. The roads are a lot narrower than Australian roads, so naturally the cars are smaller too. Buses and trains are always on time, with literally seconds separating them from their scheduled time and time of arrival. The trains travel at speeds three times the speed of the trains running around Adelaide, and have usually got at least three times more people on them at any given time, so you are lucky if you can find a free seat for more than a few seconds. *Pictured right* - learning calligraphy.



Visiting Japan was an amazing experience. It was the first time I have ever been to a non-Western culture, and it was cool spotting all the differences and getting to live it for myself instead of watching a travel show. It just doesn’t compare. I am hoping to save enough money to return to Japan in a few years’ time, to meet all the new friends I have made and revisit the places I have just seen, especially Himeji Castle, which will be fully restored and open to the public again.

Bradley Thompson, Year 10 student



During my stay in Japan I was able to visit and experience many parts of Himeji, thanks to the Himeji International Association and my host family. One of the many exciting places I visited was Universal Studios Japan with my host sister Mariko and her older sister Yukari. Mariko and I met Yukari in Osaka and she then took us to Universal Studios Japan.

Universal Studios Japan was very big with many attractions that I was able to experience. One of the rides we went on was ‘Spiderman’; this ride was in 3D and had water and fire special effects. I really enjoyed this ride. Another ride we went on was ‘Hollywood Dream’. Hollywood Dream was a big, long roller coaster. It was scary to ride but also my favourite. Some other rides that we went on were, ‘Back to the Future’, ‘Jaws’ and ‘Jurassic Park’. After we had finished going on rides we went shopping for Hello Kitty merchandise and took purikura.

I enjoyed many things in Japan and I’m thankful to my host family and the International Association for making many enjoyable memories for me. I hope to visit Himeji again soon.

Sarah Martin, Year 11 student

I enjoyed my time in Japan immensely as I was able to have contact with another country, with a new culture as well as a different language. I enjoyed being part of a Japanese family as I learnt what it really meant to be Japanese. My family were so kind and caring and I also had lots of fun with my younger siblings. They gave me many opportunities to try different types of food. Whilst I was away I enjoyed everything that I tried, I even enjoyed natto for breakfast! This is a very smelly dish of fermented soya beans and is often served with raw egg for breakfast. The school visits also meant a lot to me. Everyone was very friendly and it was interesting to learn about a different schooling system. However, I think that the highlight of my trip was when my neighbour took my host family and me to Kyoto. We went to many temples including the famous Kinkakuji (Golden Temple) and I was able to learn a lot about one of Japan’s most beautiful cities. It was

very hard to leave such a wonderful place and return to Australia, school and routine. I am looking forward to returning one day in the future.

Frances Collett, Year 11 student

Being involved with a program like the Himeji-Adelaide sister city exchange is an amazing experience. To live within a family in another culture, is the best part of being an exchange student. Sure, it’s fine for you to sightsee around Himeji, but to actually be a part of a family and live how they live is another story all together. My host family, although I am biased, was truly amazing. I felt so welcomed and when I returned to their home at the end of the day, I felt as if it was my own. My host father and I played games every night, ending up crying from laughter, I helped my host sister with her English speech and was “show and tell” for my little host brother. My host mother made me feel so welcome and that I was part of the family. They took me to as many places as they could; the hot springs, the history and science museums, shopping and of course, my favourite place of all, the beautiful Kokoan garden. Inside the Kokoan garden I had my third experience of a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, where I was able to show my host sister, who had never experienced one before, how to drink the tea in the traditional way. My host mother was so impressed and kept saying “sugoi, sugoi” which in English means “amazing, amazing”. To say goodbye to my host family was the most excruciating pain I have ever known. Every day I wish I could go back and stay with them again. They have said their door is always open to me should I ever wish to come back, which of course I plan to do (hopefully in 2012.)



This exchange is one of the best opportunities for a student to experience. I hope that for many more years this exchange will take place and one day, in the not-too-distant future, I will be back in Himeji once again, perhaps organising one of these amazing exchanges.

Michaela Lemm, Year 11 student